

REMARKS

Reconsideration and further examination of the subject patent application in light of the present Amendment and Remarks is respectfully requested. Claims 1-70 are currently pending in the application, claims 1-50, 52-61, 65 and 70 are allowed, claims 51, 62, 66-69 stand rejected, and claims 63 and 64 are objected to.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 66-69 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention, as set forth on page 2 of the Office Action. In view of claims as presently amended, applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Independent claim 66 has been amended to include language similar to the language found in claim 57, which has been allowed. Applicants submit that the specification and drawings fully support claim 66 as amended.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claim 51 has been cancelled. Claim 62 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Tsai, as set forth on pages 2-3 of the Office Action. The Examiner essentially states that all of the elements recited in claim 62 are disclosed in the Tsai reference. However, applicants wish to point out that the subject application is a continuation-in-part of Serial No. 09/430,496 filed October 29, 1999, now U.S. Patent No. 6,354,543, which cross-reference was correctly stated by the Examiner in the first paragraph on page 2 of the office action. Specifically, the filing date (10/29/99) of the parent application Serial No. 09/430,496 predates that filing date of the Tsai reference (12/20/99). Further, although the subject application is a continuation-in-part of its parent patent application, all of the subject matter of claim 62 is common to both the subject application and its

parent. In other words, support for claim 62 is found in the parent application as well as the subject application.

Accordingly, because the filing date of the parent application predates the filing date of the Tsai reference, Tsai should not be considered to be prior art under § 102, and thus should be removed from consideration. Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that claim 62 and claims depending therefrom are now allowable.

Closing Remarks

For the foregoing reasons, applicants submit that the subject application is in condition for allowance and earnestly solicits an early Notice of Allowance. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at the below-listed number.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee which may be required for this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.18, including but not limited to the issue fee, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 23-0920. Should no proper amount be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal, or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 23-0920.

Respectfully submitted,

WELSH & KATZ, LTD.

By



Eric D. Cohen

Registration No. 38,110

WELSH & KATZ, LTD.

120 South Riverside Plaza
22nd Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60606
(312) 655-1500
March 25, 2004